

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-14 SAJ-01 SAM-01 ACDA-19 IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1791

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 20288

E.O. LL652 N/A

SUBJECT: FRENCH PRESS REACTION TO RUSSIAN PROPOSAL ON
CYPRUS.

L. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR INFORMATION IS INITIAL FRENCH
MEDIA REACTION TO SOVIET PROPOSAL ON CYPRUS:

2. " THE USSR AND THE 'FAILURE' OF WESTERN GUARANTEES
TO CYPRUS": LE MONDE AUG.24 ARTICLE BY MICHEL TATU:
"THE SOVIET PLAN FOR A CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS IS COOLY
RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON.... IT IS THE VERY PRINCIPLE OF
OLD-FASHIONED NEGOTIATION THAT IS BEING DENOUNCED.
THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS IN ITS DECLARATION THAT
THE 'SO-CALLED GUARANTEES' OFFERED CYPRUS BY THE ZURICH
AND LONDON ACCORDS HAVE 'TOTALLY FAILED' AND THAT
EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE CRISIS WITHIN THE 'NARROW
FRAMEWORK' OF NATO HAVE 'MISSED THEIR TARGET'. IT IS
THUS THIS POINT WHICH THE KREMLIN IS UNDERSCORING,
MORE THAN THE RETURN TO A STATUS QUO JUDGED
UNSATISFACTORY, AT LEAST IN ITS INTERNATIONAL
PART. THE KREMLIN MEANWHILE BECOMES MUCH VAGUER ABOUT
THE DESIRABLE REGIME FOR CYPRUS: IT IS TO BE NOTED
THAT THE NAME OF MAKARIOS IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE
SOVIET DECLARATION. YET THE SOVIET POSITION HAS
HARDLY CHANGED TOWARD THE PRINCIPAL PARTIES TO THE
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CONFLICT: THE SPECIFIC ROLE OF TURKEY IS NOT MENTIONED

ONCE.... IN OTHER WORDS, MOSCOW FOR THE TIME BEING SEES ONLY ADVANTAGES IN KEEPING AN ALMOST EQUAL BALANCE BETWEEN ATHENS AND ANKARA. THE SOVIET PRESS MERELY ENCOURAGES ANTI-AMERICAN FEELINGS IN GREECE....

"AFTER ALL, EVEN THE U.S. HAS GONE FARTHER THAN THE USSR IN CONDEMNATION OF ANKARA, SINCE IT 'REGRETED' THE NEW TURKISH OFFENSIVE OF AUG.L4 -- WHICH THE SOVIET DECLARATION DOES NOT DO. "THIS SAID, THE PROPOSAL FROM MOSCOW COMES AT A TIMELY MOMENT AND FAVORABLE GROUND. IT ACTUALLY HELPS GREECE ON THE LEVEL OF PROCEDURE, SINCE ATHENS FOR THE MOMENT DOES NOT WISH TO GO BACK TO GENEVA, AND SINCE MR. MAVROS THE DAY BEFORE HAD MADE A PROPOSAL IN THE SAME SENSE AS THAT FROM MOSCOW WITH THE DISCREET HELP OF HIS YUGOSLAV COLLEAGUE. NO WONDER, THEREFORE, IF THE SOVIET INITIATIVE WAS JUDGED 'CONSTRUCTIVE' IN ATHENS. IT IS ALSO TO BE NOTED THAT MR. MALIK, THE SOVIET DELEGATE, WILL CHAIR THE SECURITY COUNCIL TILL THE END OF THIS MONTH -- WHICH SHOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR HIM TO PROMOTE HIS PROJECT -- AND THAT MR. WALDHEIM IS BEGINNING A MISSION TO CYPRUS, ATHENS AND ANKARA THIS WEEKEND.... NOTHING PRECLUDES THE BELIEF THAT HE MIGHT TRY A GOOD OFFICES MISSION. THE SOVIET PLAN, WHICH AIMS AT PITTING THE UN AGAINST THE THREE-POWER DIRECTORATE SET UP BY THE ACCORDS OF LONDON AND ZURICH, ACTUALLY HAS EVERYTHING TO GAIN FROM AN INCREASED ROLE FOR MR. WALDHEIM IN THE MATTER. AT A TIME WHEN THE BRITISH THEMSELVES CONFESS THEIR PESSIMISM ABOUT THE CHANCES OF RESUMING THE GENEVA NEGOTIATION, AND WHEN MR. KISSINGER MAINTAINS A RESERVED ATTITUDE, THE CALL FROM MOSCOW HAS THE BEST CHANCE OF BEING HEEDED. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN BY WHICH MEANS THE U.S.--WHICH HAS NOTHING TO GAIN FROM THE SOVIET INITIATIVE AND WHICH WANTS TO SETTLE THE MATTER WITHIN WESTERN STRUCTURES -- WILL TRY TO SLOW DOWN THE MOVE. ONLY A MUCH MORE VIGOROUS INITIATIVE ON THE PART OF MR. KISSINGER, IMPOSING A MEDIATION ON THE TWO PARTIES AND SERIOUS CONCESSIONS ON TURKEY, IT SEEMS, HAS SERIOUS CHANCES OF BEING SUCCESSFUL."

3. AURORE REPORTED SATURDAY:"THE SOVIET PLAN IS UNCLASSIFIED

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MEETING ONLY WITH RESERVATION, OPPOSITION AND SKEPTICISM....THE WIDENING OF THE PROBLEM WISHED FOR BY THE KREMLIN SO FAR HAS GIVEN RISE TO MIXED REACTIONS RANGING FROM THE FAINT ACCEPTANCE OF ATHENS TO THE REFUSAL OF ANKARA, THE POLITE SKEPTICISM OF WASHINGTON AND THE RESERVATIONS OF LONDON AND PARIS.

4.COMBAT SATURDAY:"MOSCOW IS FLIRTING WITH ATHENS....

THE SOVIET MOVE COINCIDES WITH A CHARM OFFENSIVE TOWARD
ATHENS TO WHICH THE GREEK LEADERS ARE NOT
INSENSIBLE. THE KARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS

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CALLED THE PROPOSALS 'CONSTRUCTIVE' MIGHT IN FACT
CONSIDER THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS THE ONLY BIG POWER
THAT CAN STRENGTHEN HIS HAND. IN THIS REGARD, THE
RETURN TO GREECE OF R. FLORAKIS, THE COMMUNIST PARTY
LEADER IS A SIGNIFICANT ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE LEADERS
IN THE KREMLIN."

5. THE MAIN HEADLINE IN FIGARO SATURDAY RAN:"CYPRUS:
SKEPTICISM AND EMBARRASSMENT IN THE WEST FACING THE
SOVIET INITIATIVE PROPOSING AN INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE UN." WASHINGTON
CORRESPONDENT J.JACQUET-FRANCILLON REPORTED IN THE
SAME ISSUE:"NO ONE HERE TAKES MOSCOW SERIOUSLY IN
THE MATTER.... NO ONE HERE BELIEVES THAT ANYTHING
COULD BE SOLVED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SO BROAD AN
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AS THE ONE PROPOSED BY MOSCOW.
THIS IS WHY ALL AMERICAN OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT IT IS
IS JUST A FUTILE PROPAGANDA MOVE. FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

TO WIN THE FAVORS OF ATHENS? TO TAKE ADVANTAGE FROM THE ANTI-AMERICAN REACTIONS OF THE GREEKS? THIS DOES NOT CREATE ANY ILLUSION HERE. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE GREEKS DO NOT FEEL THE URGE AND CANNOT AFFORD TO THROW THEMSELVES INTO MOSCOW'S ARMS. JACQUES RENARD
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IN FIGARO "...IT CAN BE CONSIDERED CERTAIN THAT THE FORUM REPRESENTATIVE OF STATES REFLECTING THE POLITICAL IMAGE OF THE PRESENT WORLD, AS THE SOVIET DECLARATION SAYS, WILL NEVER TAKE PLACE. THE AMERICANS, WHO FEIGN TO ATTACH NO IMPORTANCE TO THE INITIATIVE OF MOSCOW, WILL DO WHAT IS NEEDED, AND THE CHINESE, WHO DIDN'T PARTICIPATE IN THE RECENT VOTE ON CYPRUS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, ARE BOUND TO SABOTAGE THE OPERATION CAREFULLY. "THIS WILL ENABLE FRANCE TO EXTRICATE HERSELF WITHOUT DAMAGE FROM A THORNY SITUATION: AWARE OF THE EMBARRASSMENT WHICH SUCH A CONFERENCE WOULD CAUSE TO THE WEST, FRANCE, HOWEVER, COULDN'T POSSIBLY OPPOSE IT OPENLY WITHOUT DISCREDITING THE ROLE SHE INTENDS TO PLAY AT THE UN ROSTRUM; ESPECIALLY SO AFTER MAKING HERSELF CONSPICUOUS WITH HER RESOLUTION CONDEMNING 'ANY UNILATERAL MILITARY ACTION IN CYPRUS'. THE EPISODE IN ANY CASE WILL COMFORT THE GREEKS WHOSE APPEALS TO THE BIG POWERS ON THE EVE OF THE RESUMPTION OF THE TURKISH OFFENSIVE IN CYPRUS HAD REMAINED WITHOUT ANY ECHO.

7. DESCRIBED AS "A DIPLOMATIC IMBROGLIO", THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS CONTINUED TO DOMINATE INTERNATIONAL STORIES IN THE WEEKEND TV NEWS. THE USSR'S PROPOSAL WAS REPORTED AS AROUSING LITTLE INTEREST, ESPECIALLY ON THE PART OF THE U.S. BOTH NETWORKS SAW SECSTATE KISSINGER'S POSITION AS "DISCREET" AND "RESERVED". FRENCH FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL DESTREMAU IN AN INTERVIEW FRIDAY EVENING ON ORTF I, SEEMED TO FIND A CONTRADICTION IN THE USSR'S MOVE, AFTER ITS REJECTION OF FRANCE'S PROPOSAL BEFORE THE UN, TO BRING THE AFFAIR AGAIN BEFORE THE SAME ORGANIZATION.
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